

## Message Text

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47 41

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 4935

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TH

SUBJ: PROPOSED INCREASE IN DEA PERSONNEL

1. I HAVE RECENTLY BEEN BRIEFED ON DEA "PROJECT THAIAM" WHICH RECOMMENDS CERTAIN CHANGES IN THE ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING OF THE DEA REGION 16 OFFICE IN BANGKOK. STATE 247222 (DEC. 73), REPORTING THAT THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON NARCOTICS HAD APPROVED UP TO 20 NEW POSITIONS FOR THIS OFFICE, ALSO RELATES TO THIS DEA REPORT.

2. THE DEA PROPOSAL CREATES PROBLEMS FOR US. ON THE ONE HAND I ATTACH THE HIGHEST PRIORITY TO OUR EFFORTS TO HELP THE THAI INTERDICT THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS INTO AND THROUGH THAILAND. AT THE SAME TIME, AS I HAVE REPORTED IN A NUMBER OF MESSAGES, IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT WE KEEP THE SIZE OF THE OFFICIAL AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN THAILAND AT THE MINIMUM. THE THAI ARE BECOMING MORE SENSITIVE THAN EVER BEFORE ABOUT THE SIZE OF OUR MISSION AND THE SCOPE OF OUR ACTIVITIES. WE WILL SOON BE MOVING INTO WHAT PROMISES TO BE A HEATED ELECTION CAMPAIGN, FOLLOWED PERHAPS BY A PERIOD OF FREE-SWINGING PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY. THE PROPOSED DEA INCREASE RUNS COUNTER TO EFFORTS I AM MAKING TO PARE THE SIZE OF OTHER ELEMENTS OF THIS MISSION TO REDUCE OUR VISABILITY AND AVOID FURTHER COMPLICATIONS IN THAI-US RELATIONS.

3. DESPITE THE PROBLEMS MENTIONED IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPH, I AGREE ON BALANCE TO THOSE INCREASES HAVING TO DO WITH THE THAI PROGRAM UNDER THE CONDITIONS NOTED BELOW. AS FAR AS THOSE  
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POSITIONS WITH REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES ARE CONCERNED, I ASK

THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES IN WASHINGTON TO REVIEW THESE CAREFULLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES LEVIED ON THE REGION 16 OFFICE TO SEE IF CONSOLIDATION IS NOT POSSIBLE IN SOME CASES OR IF CERTAIN OF THESE FUNCTIONS CANNOT BE PERFORMED ELSEWHERE TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE INCREASE IN BANGKOK.

4. MY QUALIFIED APPROVAL FOR THE DEA PROPOSAL IS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) BEFORE ANY OF THESE PEOPLE ARE INTRODUCED INTO THAILAND WE MUST HAVE A CLEAR SIGNAL FROM THE APPROPRIATE THAI AUTHORITIES THAT THEY WANT THEM, WILL WORK WITH THEM AND BELIEVE THAT THESE PEOPLE WILL MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT. I WANT AT ALL COSTS TO AVOID A SITUATION IN WHICH THE THAI AGREE TO TAKE ADDITIONAL U.S. PERSONNEL BECAUSE THEY THINK THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO GET ADDITIONAL U.S. AID.

(B) AT THE END OF A TWO YEAR PERIOD, EVERY ONE OF THESE POSITIONS MUST BE REVIEWED TO SEE WHETHER IT IS STILL REQUIRED OR WHETHER THE FUNCTION COULD NOT THEN BE PERFORMED SOME OTHER WAY. THESE PERSONNEL ARE BEING INTRODUCED GENERALLY TO HELP THE THAI AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES IMPROVE THEIR CAPABILITIES. WE CANNOT LET THEM ACQUIRE VESTED BUREAUCRATIC INTERESTS SO THAT, AT SOME POINT IN THE FUTURE, IT TAKES AN ACT OF CONGRESS TO GET THEM OUT.

(C) THE PROPOSED DEA DISTRICT OFFICE AT SATTAHIP SHOULD BE PUT ON ICE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. IF A FUTURE NEED ARISES, THIS CAN BE RECONSIDERED. THIS WILL REDUCE BY THREE THE REQUESTED PERSONNEL INCREASES.

(D) TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE CLERICAL PERSONNEL SHOULD BE RECRUITED LOCALLY AMONG DEPENDENTS ALREADY LIVING IN BANGKOK. THIS WILL HELP REDUCE THE NUMBER OF NEW FAMILY UNITS BROUGHT HERE UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

(E) ALL PERSONNEL SHOULD HAVE DETAILED AREA BRIEFINGS, WITH PARTICULAR STRESS ON POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES AND THE NEED TO MAXIMIZE LOCAL EFFORTS AND LOCAL INITIATIVE. THOSE PERSONNEL WHO WILL BE DEALING CLOSELY WITH THE THAI SHOULD HAVE LANGUAGE TRAINING PRIOR TO THEIR ARRIVAL.

(F) AS NOTED IN PARAGRAPH 3 ABOVE, I REQUEST THE  
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WASHINGTON AGENCIES CONCERNED TO VET CAREFULLY THESE RECOMMENDATIONS TO KEEP THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WITH REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM.

5. I NOTE ALSO THAT THE DEA STUDY RAISES THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING DEA PERSONNEL PILOT AIRPLANES IN THAILAND FOR ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES. THIS RAISES FAR TOO MANY PROBLEMS. ANY AIRPLANES FLYING IN THAILAND FOR THESE PURPOSES WILL HAVE TO BE PILOTED

BY THAI OR BY PERSONNEL FROM BONA FIDE CONTRACTOR FIRMS WHICH  
ARE HERE WITH APPROVAL OF THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT.  
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